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AT EASE, PAY IT FORWARD

Heart of a Lion

FEBRUARY 28, 2023 · 3 MINUTE READ · STORY BY AMANDA LONG
· PHOTOGRAPHY BY MISSY CREED MCFERRON & JEFFERSON CITY HOST LIONS CLUB





...serves the Jefferson City community with pride.

Nearing their 100th anniversary in 2025, the men and women of the Jefferson City Host Lions Club have volunteered their time, talents, and resources to their community since June 11, 1925, proudly touting the motto, “We serve.”

One of the first Lions Clubs chartered in Missouri, the JC Host Lions Club has provided leadership and funding to a variety of local entities, including the JC Parks board, school safety patrol, Boys and Girls Club of Jefferson City, Miller Performing Arts Center, Special Olympics Missouri, and many local events. During its years of service, the JC Host Lions Club has sponsored 45 area Lions Clubs, hence the term “host.” The club currently has 145 active Lions, one of the largest memberships in the state. The current president, Bruce Berger, is the 98th in a line of succession that has never had a repeat.

“The way you become president is to just stay in the club long enough,” Bruce laughs.

The current leadership group includes Doug Pavitt (first vice president), Charlie Lindquist (second vice president), co-secretaries Bruce Bates and Janet Ousley, Larry Brandhorst (treasurer), Mark Schreiber (tail twister), and Rich Joseph (club lion tamer). The JC Host Lions Club is one of the 48,000 clubs that comprise Lions Club International, the largest service organization in the world that serves more than 200 countries and geographic areas with roughly 1.4 million members.





Lions Youth Exchange students (left) from Spain, Hungary, Brazil, and Germany. The Jefferson City Host Lions Club (right), in partnership with the Jefferson City Parks and Recreation Department and the Jordan family, dedicates its Water Oasis on the Jefferson City Greenway in the Hyde Park area.

“There is an existing perception of the Lions Club that we are just a bunch of old folks in yellow vests,” says Lyle Rosburg, former president and current head of marketing. “We are always working to attract younger people to the club.”

The Lions Club’s service projects focus on five global causes: vision, diabetes, environment, hunger, and childhood cancer. For their vision project, they provide vision screenings for public and parochial school students in kindergarten, first, third, fifth, and seventh grade. This year, they will also provide screenings at daycares.

“If you can’t see, you can’t learn,” Bruce says. “We are finding there are more and more instances with vision impairment due to extended screen time, and we are helping to catch those earlier.”

Jefferson City has six yellow mailbox-style drop boxes at various locations where used eyeglasses and hearing aids can be turned in for recycling and reuse. Lions works in partnership with Missouri Department of Conservation’s (MDC) Runge Conservation Nature Center on the annual native plant exchange. This event helps educate the community about the importance of native plants to the environment and allows residents to exchange existing invasive species.



plants, Bruce shares. In 2022, the JC Post Lions Club successfully helped raise more than \$25,000 for the Salvation Army during the D. Wayne Osgood Ring the Bell Event.





20 minutes on non-political topics.

“We work hard, but we try to have fun, too,” Lyle says. “It is a great way to help the community but also network with people.”

Eyeglass Locations

1. **Schulte’s Fresh Foods** – 1904 Southwest Blvd.
2. **Capital Mall** – 3600 Country Club Dr. (south side)
3. **Burns Optical** – 2421 West Edgewood Dr., Ste. A
4. **Washington Park** – Virginia St.
5. **Central Missouri Medical Park Center** – 1705 Christy Dr.
6. **Gerbes Super Store** – 2101 Schotthill Woods Dr.

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